

Proudly Serving Chicago Since 1833

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), Chicago District mission is to provide valued, world-class leadership, engineering services, and management capabilities to the diverse stakeholders and partners within the greater Chicagoland metropolitan area and the nation.

In 1833, Army engineers began construction of a harbor at the mouth of the Chicago River, creating an important shipping center. From 1844 to 1915, USACE constructed and improved harbors along the Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin shorelines. From the 1940s through the 1970s, the district was involved in a variety of military and civil construction projects including NIKE missile bases, the military facility at O'Hare, widening the Cal-Sag navigation channel and constructing Burns Harbor. In the 1980s, the Chicago District took over operation and maintenance of the Chicago Harbor Lock and expanded its interagency support to include providing construction assistance to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's wastewater treatment Construction Grants Program and Superfund. In the 1990s, the Chicago District began several major flood risk management projects in Illinois and Northwest Indiana, directed the emergency relief effort for the Great Chicago Tunnel Flood, developed an enhanced aquatic ecosystem restoration program and started addressing aquatic nuisance species issues.

Today, the Chicago District is responsible for water resources development in the Chicago metropolitan area - 5,000 square miles with a population of more than nine million - through a variety of projects including flood risk management and coastal storm damage reduction, navigation, aquatic ecosystem restoration, emergency management, and interagency and international services.

District Boundaries



For More Information

For information about the Chicago District, please visit www.lrc.usace.army.mil or call the Public Affairs Office at 312-846-5330.

Social Media:



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US Army Corps
of Engineers®



Northerly Island



Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal Electric Barriers



McCook Reservoir



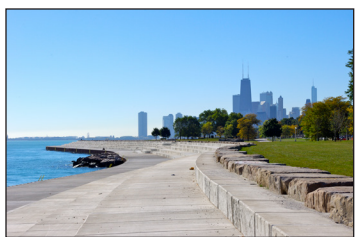
Chicago Harbor Lock

Flood Risk Management and Coastal Storm Damage Reduction

The Chicago District partners with communities throughout the region to help manage flood risk through structural and non-structural solutions.

The McCook Reservoir Project is a 10-billion-gallon reservoir that will capture combined sewer overflows that cause flooding and degrade water quality in area waterways. The project will benefit Chicago and 36 suburbs, including 1.5 million structures and three million people. The Little Calumet River Flood Control Project provides flood protection consisting of new levees and floodwalls, rehabilitation of existing pump stations, a flow-control structure, floodproofing and a flood-warning system.

USACE provides safe and reliable projects that reduce economic damages and prevent loss of life from both inland flooding and coastal storm damage. The Chicago Shoreline Project provides storm damage protection to the Lake Michigan shoreline and to Lake Shore Drive, a major transportation artery in the city. The existing shoreline structures, built in the early 1900s, had deteriorated and no longer functioned to protect against storms, flooding and erosion. The project also provides safe access to the water's edge and preserves unobstructed views of Lake Michigan.



The Chicago Shoreline Project provides nearly 10 miles of shoreline protection.

Navigation

The Chicago District maintains seven major harbors on the Illinois and Indiana shores of Lake Michigan; dredges to remove sediment and maintain navigation depth; collects hydrographic survey data; performs maintenance of breakwaters; and operates and maintains the Chicago Lock, one of the busiest in the nation.

Environment

Ecosystem restoration efforts involve a comprehensive examination of problems contributing to system degradation and the development of alternative plans for their restoration.

Protecting and restoring streams, lakes and wetlands is critical due to their role in providing habitat for fish and wildlife, as well as the environmental and economic value they provide to the public.



The Northerly Island project included creating pond, marsh, wet prairie, mesic prairie and black oak savanna habitats for resident and migratory species of insect, fish, amphibian, reptile and bird.

The Chicago District has integrated aquatic ecosystem restoration measures into flood risk management projects and has numerous stand-alone projects.

As a member of the Asian Carp Regional Coordinating Committee, USACE is working to prevent Asian carp from establishing sustainable populations in the Great Lakes.

The electric barriers in the Chicago Sanitary and Ship Canal are operated to deter Asian carp from moving into Lake Michigan. The Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study evaluates potential options and controls that could prevent aquatic nuisance species transfer between the Great Lakes and Mississippi River basins through aquatic pathways.



Indiana Harbor and Canal Confined Disposal Facility Project involves dredging and safely confining thousands of yards of sediment to restore navigation depth.

Regulatory

Through its Regulatory Program, USACE is committed to protecting the nation's aquatic resources, while allowing reasonable development through fair, flexible and balanced permit decisions. USACE evaluates permit applications for essentially all construction activities that occur in the nation's waters, including wetlands. The Chicago District Regulatory Branch ensures compliance with issued permits, restores sites affected by unauthorized work and deters any future un-permitted activities.

Emergency Management

The Chicago District provides emergency response during natural disasters, such as flood and coastal emergencies, and provides emergency support to other agencies, particularly the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Tasks include disaster preparedness; emergency operations; rehabilitation of flood protection infrastructure threatened or destroyed by flooding; emergency clean water supply provisions and post-flood temporary construction and repairs to essential public utilities and facilities. Emergency support and response efforts have included both local area flooding and Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

Interagency and International Services

IIS is the USACE program that provides technical assistance to non-Department of Defense federal agencies, state and local governments, tribal nations, private U.S. firms, international organizations, and foreign governments. USACE provides engineering and construction services; environmental restoration and management services; research and development assistance; management of water and land-related natural resources; relief and recovery work; and other management and technical services. USACE also provides Overseas Contingency Operations Support.

